

Application of the Motivation Scale for Disability Sport Consumption: An Examination of Intended Future Consumption Behavior of Collegiate Wheelchair Basketball Spectators

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Consumer behavior studies in the context of sports have been used to examine (a) why subjects consume a sport (Funk, Mahony, & Ridinger, 2002; Wann, Grieve, Zapalac, & Pease, 2008); (b) the process of market segmentation such as examination of consumption by way of sex (Trail, Robinson, & Kim, 2008), gender (Wann & Waddill, 2003), single game attendees and season ticket holders (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman, 2003); and (c) influence on intended future consumption behavior (e.g., Andrew, Kim, O'Neal, Greenwell, & James, 2009; Byon et al., 2011; Byon et al. 2010). To date, most research in this area has neglected the disability sport context. The purpose of this study is to utilize the only existing disability sport scale, the Motivation Scale for Disability Sport Consumption (MSDSC; Cottingham et al., 2012), to identify the motives salient in predicting intended future consumption behaviors, specifically repatronage intentions, future media consumption, and future merchandise purchases. Data were collected from 470 spectators at the Collegiate Wheelchair Basketball Championships held in Arlington Texas. Three multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine the significance of each of the factors identified in the MSDSC in predicting the outcome variables of repatronage intentions, intended merchandise consumption, and intended media consumption. Results indicated that four motives were significant predictors of all three outcome variables, specifically, acquisition of knowledge, escape, physical skill and social interaction. This research will directly benefit practitioners, such as disability sport organizations, who are interested in expanding their marketing base yet lack the resources for formal marketing departments (IPC, 2010).

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Miles Thompson, head coach of the University of Alabama wheelchair basketball team, stated that “the biggest reason we don’t have enough [collegiate wheelchair basketball] teams are budgetary constraints” (personal communication, April 2, 2011). While wheelchair basketball has grown in popularity, the formation of teams is hindered by a lack of funding. The ‘enough’ that Thompson refers to is number of teams required for NCAA recognition. A number of coaches and administrators of other collegiate wheelchair basketball teams believe that this status would bring the sport more credibility and institutional support.

Only two of the seven men’s collegiate wheelchair basketball teams and one of the four women’s wheelchair basketball teams are housed in university athletic departments, which help support travel budgets, funding for coaching staff, equipment management, and academic tutoring. The remaining teams are housed in disability services centers on campus, adaptive athletic departments, and sports club departments, which do not offer the same level of financial backing. These teams rely primarily on funds received from annual fundraising activities, which requires substantial efforts by staff, volunteers, and students to procure resources in hopes of offsetting the expenses incurred by the team. For these programs to survive, and for other universities to develop new teams, revenue must be increased. This is the only way that the wheelchair basketball will continue to grow in order to meet the threshold necessary for NCAA status.

Social Justice and Funding

Oliver (1990) noted that a medical model of disability—the contemporary perspective that disability was a physical or psychological limitation within an individual—was flawed in that it did not address society’s responsibility in influencing for better or worse the impact of that disability. This relationship of a privileged group oppressing a disadvantaged group either actively or passively warrants an offset by justification of social justice (Danermark & Gellerstedt, 2004; Fay, 2011).

Perspectives such as Oliver’s led to professionals’ application for social justice in fields related to disability. Sylvester (1992) stated that those with disabilities have a right to leisure; Sylvester (2011) also gave a presentation of the benefits and limitations of resource allocation by way of disability classification related to social justice. The arguments for allocation of resources to disability sport have been championed by researchers such as Anderson, Bedini and Moreland (2005) and Stoll (2011) who claim that athletic access should be universally applied, regardless of disability. These arguments have been well received by practitioners, evidenced by the fact that Great Britain, the United States, and Canada, among many other nations, have integrated the Paralympics within their respective

Olympic national governing bodies, both organizationally and financially (Scruton, 1998). While this has been an effective means to increase revenue for some disability sport organizations, by the International Paralympic Committee's (IPC) own admission, additional revenue must be generated by way of ticket sales and sponsorship spurred by increased viewership (IPC, 2008).

Wheelchair Basketball

Much of the research on wheelchair basketball has focused on the participants of the sport. Examples include efficiency of wheelchair basketball movement (Coutts, 1992; Vanlandewijck, Spaepen, & Lysens, 1994), physiological performance of wheelchair basketball players (De Lira et. al., 2010; Molik, Laskin, Kosmol, Skucas, & Bida, 2010) and psychological performance of wheelchair basketball players (Ferreira & Fox, 2008; Robbins, Houston, & Dummer, 2010).

While these studies benefit both researchers and practitioners looking to advance the performance of wheelchair basketball, they have not addressed the financial concern of the IPC and program directors of collegiate wheelchair basketball teams who need to increase revenue. More recently, several studies examined consumer behavior in the sport, specifically on motivation (Byon, Carroll, Cottingham, Grady, & Allen, 2011; Byon, Cottingham, & Carroll, 2010) and points of attachment (Cottingham, Chatfield, Gearity, Allen, & Hall, 2012). Each of these studies applied a consumer behavior scale designed for non-disability sport to a disability sport context. This was accomplished by examining the model fit by confirmatory or exploratory factor analysis. Each model showed reasonable but not good fit in this new context. The instrument was then used to examine reported future consumption behavior, including repatronage intentions, desire to purchase merchandise and intended future media consumption.

The Motivation Scale for Disability Sport Consumption (Cottingham et al., 2014); MSDSC) was developed and validated. While establishing the MSDSC is an important first step, this current study did not apply the MSDSC in order to examine consumption behavior. The MSDSC may not be valuable to practitioners as a stand-alone scale, but its application to future consumption behavior would allow promoters of collegiate wheelchair basketball to identify which motives were most salient and presumably most influential in increasing future consumption (Byon et al. 2011; Byon et al., 2010).

Application of Motivation Studies

Motivation is defined as “the driving force within individuals that impels them to action” (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004, p. 87). Sloan's 1989 manuscript, is widely identified

as the preeminent text that examined motivations influencing consumer behavior in the context of sport. The study of sport consumer behavior was advanced by Wann (1995) and Trail and James (2001), who developed motivation scales which measured the motives of sport spectators. Researchers realized that these studies were not in and of themselves the means to more effective marketing but instead a mechanism by which to examine various aspects of consumer behavior. The relevance of these studies can be categorized into three functions. The application of motivation can be used to examine (a) why subjects consume a sport (Dubihlela, Dhurup, & Surujlal, 2009; Funk, Mahony, & Ridinger, 2002; Seo & Green, 2008; Wann, Grieve, Zapalac, & Pease, 2008); (b) the process of market segmentation such as examination of consumption by way of sex (Trail, Robinson, & Kim, 2008; Wann & Waddill, 2003), gender (Wann & Waddill, 2003), single game attendees and season ticket holders (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman, 2003); and (c) influence on intended future consumption behavior such as repatronage intentions (Byon et al., 2011; Byon et al. 2010), merchandise consumption (Andrew, Kim, O'Neal, Greenwell, & James, 2009) and media consumption (Byon et al. 2011; Byon et al., 2010; Kim, Greenwell, Andrew, Lee, & Mahony, 2008). Byon et al. (2011) presented the argument that intended future consumption behavior is a valuable mechanism to increase disability sport market share.

While Byon et al. (2011) examined intended future consumption behavior, the study used a motivation scale designed for non-disability sport contexts, potentially presenting an incomplete perspective on the influence of motives on intended future consumption behaviors. To more accurately study future intended consumption behavior of disability sport, a motivation study should employ a scale that incorporates motives unique to disability. The findings could assist practitioners to increase sport consumption and market share. The purpose of this study is to utilize the only existing disability sport scale, the Motivation Scale for Disability Sport Consumption (MSDSC; Cottingham et al., 2014), to identify which motives are salient in predicting intended future consumption behaviors, specifically repatronage intentions, future media consumption, and future merchandise purchases.

Methods

Context

Data were collected at the 2011 Collegiate National Wheelchair Basketball Championships at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). All games were held at Texas Hall. Seven men's teams and four women's teams competed in the national championship tournament over the course of three days.

Participants and Data Collection

Spectators were surveyed at eight of the 13 games. The majority of surveys were collected at two games involving UTA's men's team. Surveys were provided before games, during half time and after games to spectators at entrances. Data was collected from 470 spectators. All subjects who completed the survey were at least 18 years old and provided with informed consent. Almost half of those in attendance were 18-22 years old (45.5%; presumably students at UTA), and 46.9% of those in attendance were female.

Instrument

The MSDSC was developed by way of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (Cottingham et al., 2014). The 33-item nine factor scale demonstrated good model fit ($\chi^2 = 742.119$, $p < 0.001$; $\chi^2 / df = 1.645$, CFI = 0.922, and RMSEA = 0.053). The Cronbach alpha levels of all factors were above .70 and factor loadings were above .40. In addition, no issues of multicollinearity were present. The MSDSC utilized modified factors from the Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (MSSC, Trail & James 2001; Trail, 2010), including escape (3 items), social interaction (3 items), acquisition of knowledge (3 items), physical attractiveness (3 items), drama (3 items), physical skill/aesthetics (4 items), and aggression/violence (4 items). Additionally, two motives specific to the context of disability sport, supercrip image and inspiration, were tested and found to be viable motives in the MSDSC. These were supercrip image and inspiration. Items designed to identify supercrip image (5 items) were based in part off of Lockwood and Kunda (1997) and Thrash and Elliot (2003). Items designed to identify inspiration (5 items) were modified from the studies of Hardin and Hardin (2004), Hartnett (2000), Kama, (2004), and Taub, Blinde, and Greer (1999).

The following consumption variables were included: three items measuring repatronage intentions (Söderlund, 2006), three items measuring intended merchandise consumption (Fink, Trail, & Anderson, 2002), and three items measuring intended online media consumption (modified from Byon et al., 2010).

Data Modification

Of 470 returned surveys, 418 were fully completed. Of the incomplete data, 47 surveys were missing a single item and 5 were missing between 2-4 items. Because most surveys were completed, and very little data was missing, it was determined that means should be substituted for subjects with 1-4 missing items (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006).

Analysis

Three multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine the significance of each of the factors identified in the MSDSC in predicting the outcome variables of repatronage intentions, intended merchandise consumption, and intended media consumption.

Results

Assumptions

Before any multiple regression analyses were conducted, relevant data were examined to determine if the data met the assumptions of homoscedasticity and normality, and data were also examined for multicollinearity. The data met all assumptions. Cronbach's alpha levels of the motives were all above .70, ranging from .727 (drama) to .873 (supercrip image). The Cronbach's alpha values for intended future sport consumption were also all above .70, with intention to consume wheelchair basketball media (.760), intention to consume merchandise (.773) and repatronage intentions (.869).

Motivation and Intended Wheelchair Basketball Media Consumption of Wheelchair Basketball Spectators

Examining the model with intended wheelchair basketball media consumption as a dependent variable and motivation as the independent variable, a multiple regression analysis demonstrated significant model fit accounting for 45.8% variance within the model. Acquisition of knowledge ($\beta = .424, p < .001$), escape ($\beta = .241, p < .001$), physical skill/aesthetics ($\beta = .208, p = .002$), social interaction ($\beta = .100, p = .019$), and violence ($\beta = -.101, p = .021$) were all predictors of intended wheelchair basketball media. A presentation of significant factors, significance levels, and standardized and unstandardized coefficients are located on Table 1.

Table 1

Multiple Regression Analyses Examining the Relationship between the Spectator Motives and Intended Future Consumption Factors

Consumption Factors	Predictors	B	SE.B	R2	ΔR2	Δ	t	p
Online Media Consumption				0.677	0.458			
	Acquisition of Knowledge	0.424	0.031			0.531	13.519	0.000
	Escape	0.241	0.036			0.254	6.644	0.000
	Physical Skill / Aesthetics	0.215	0.070			0.140	3.059	0.002
	Social Interaction	0.100	0.042			0.090	2.362	0.019
	Violence / Aggression	- 0.101	0.044			- 0.091	- 2.313	0.021
Merchandise Consumption				0.327	0.313			
	Acquisition of Knowledge	0.208	0.032			0.288	6.588	0.000
	Supercrrip Image	0.208	0.061			0.190	3.422	0.001
	Physical Skill / Aesthetics	0.187	0.071			0.135	2.642	0.009
	Social Interaction	0.148	0.043			0.147	3.482	0.001
	Escape	0.130	0.036			0.152	3.563	0.000
	Physical Attractiveness	- 0.102	0.033			- 0.128	- 3.138	0.002
Repatronage Intentions				0.494	0.484			
	Physical Skill / Aesthetics	0.278	0.059			0.208	4.692	0.000
	Acquisition of Knowledge	0.272	0.026			0.391	10.307	0.000
	Drama	0.190	0.050			0.161	3.793	0.000
	Inspiration	0.133	0.047			0.133	2.850	0.005
	Social Interaction	0.083	0.036			0.086	2.341	0.020
	Escape	0.079	0.031			0.095	2.575	0.010
	Physical Attractiveness	- 0.060	0.027			- 0.077	- 2.198	0.028

Motivation and Intended Merchandise Consumption of Wheelchair Basketball Spectators

Examining the model with intention to consume merchandise as a dependent variable and motivation as the independent variable, a multiple regression analysis demonstrated significant model fit accounting for 32.7% variance within the model. Acquisition of knowledge ($\beta = .208, p < .001$), supercrip image ($\beta = .208, p = .001$), escape ($\beta = .130, p < .001$), social interaction ($\beta = .148, p = .001$), physical attraction ($\beta = -.102, p = .002$), and physical skill/aesthetics ($\beta = .187, p = .009$) were all predictors of intended merchandise consumption. A presentation of significant factors, significance levels, and standardized and unstandardized coefficients are located on Table 1.

Motivation and Repatronage Intentions of Wheelchair Basketball Spectators

Examining the model with repatronage intentions as a dependent variable and motivation as the independent variable, a multiple regression analysis demonstrated significant model fit accounting for 49.4% variance within the model. Physical skill/aesthetics ($\beta = .278, p < .001$), acquisition of knowledge ($\beta = .272, p < .001$), drama ($\beta = .190, p < .001$), inspiration ($\beta = .185, p = .005$), escape ($\beta = .079, p = .01$), social interaction ($\beta = .083, p = .02$) and physical attraction ($\beta = -.6, p < .028$) were all significant predictors of repatronage intentions. A presentation of significant factors, significance levels, and standardized and unstandardized coefficients are located on Table 1.

Discussion

MSDSC Efficacy

The effectiveness of a scale is dependent on the amount of variance explained by a model, which can be specific to a field and a context. In order to determine the effectiveness of the MSDSC in explaining intended future consumption behavior, these results are compared to relevant studies under each predictor variable.

Intended Media Consumption

Kim et al. (2008) and Andrew et al. (2009) both examined mixed martial arts (MMA) male and female spectators' intention to consume media. Kim's study found 53.8% of variance explained for male spectators and 43% explained for female spectators when examining media consumption by way of his consumer motivation model. While this is substantially more variance than explained in this model, some of the motives identified, such as sport interest and national pride, are more similar to points of attachment (Robinson,

Trail, & Kwon, 2004; Trail, Robinson, Dick, & Gillentine, 2003). For this reason a more appropriate comparison would be made with the findings of Andrew et al. (2009) who used a more strict interpretation of motives. Andrew's model explained 41.8% of variance of intended media consumption for males and 44.4% for females.

This study explained more variance than the Andrew's study. However, this comparison may not be appropriate as Andrew et al. studied desire to consume media by way of television viewership; disability sport is visible almost exclusively on webcasts. Even studies in non-adaptive settings such as Seo and Green (2008), who measured online viewership, considered consumption of website for information by way of articles and results rather than webcasted games. For this reason, the Byon et al. (2011) and Byon et al. (2010) studies are unique in their examination of media consumption as they examined viewership of live streaming disability sport.

Byon et al. (2010) explained 51% of variance of intended online viewership; Byon et al. (2011) explained 54% and 41% of intended online viewership for males and females respectively. This study explained modestly less variance (45.8%) than the Byon studies, due to the application of vicarious achievement, whose operational definition contains limitations (Cottingham et al., 2014).

Most importantly, knowledge was consistently a significant and impactful variable for media consumption in this study as well as the previous Byon studies, bringing further credibility to the theory that knowledge may be the most important motive in the context of disability sport.

Intended Merchandise Consumption

The Andrew et al. (2009) study showed 29.7% of variance explained for males and 33% for females of MMA spectators. This study showed 32.7% of variance explained by the model, comparable to Andrew's study. Andrew's study examined some of the same motives but the scales were different enough that a comparison of specific motives would not be fruitful, so instead comparisons should be made with Byon et al. (2011), the only study to examine motivations' ability to explain variance of intended merchandise consumption.

Like Andrew's study, Byon et al. (2011) examined gender differences. Byon's study used the MSSC and explained 40% of variance for males and 33% for females. More interestingly, knowledge, the strongest predictor in the current study, was only impactful for male spectators and not as impactful as physical skill. For females, drama was the most impactful variable followed by vicarious achievement. Cottingham et al. (2014) identified the concern with application of vicarious achievement in this context and drama was not a significant predictor in the present study.

To note, this study identified supercrip image (a previously unidentified factor unique to disability sport) as a significant predictor of future merchandise consumption intentions. Because the MSDSC identifies supercrip image as a motivation and correctly recommends the removal of vicarious achievement due to the operational definition limitations identified in Cottingham et al., 2014), the MSDSC would seem to be a more accurate scale at explaining variance in intention to purchase merchandise compared to Byon et al (2011)., even if it explains moderately less variance.

Repatronage Intentions

A number of studies have examined attendance and its influence on motivation (Dubihlela et al., 2009; Funk et al., 2003; Wann et al., 2008), with an explicit or implicit inference that motivations by spectators can be applied to determine future attendance. Repatronage intentions have been examined in other consumer behavior studies, for example to service quality (Theodorakis & Alexandris, 2008). However, due to the limited measurements of repatronage intentions in motivation studies, it is most important to compare this study to Byon et al. (2011) and Byon et al. (2010).

Byon et al. (2010) explained 40% of repatronage intentions, and Byon et al. (2011) identified 65% and 49% of variance explained of repatronage intentions for males and females respectively. In contrast, the MSDSC explained 49.4% of variance of repatronage intentions in this study; this finding was comparable to the Byon studies. Knowledge was again one of the most impactful predictor variables both in this study and the Byon studies, strengthening the case that knowledge is the most important motive when considering repatronage intentions.

Primary Themes Identified

First, the MSDSC explains comparable variance related to intended media and merchandise consumption when compared to non-adaptive sport contexts. It also seems to be a more appropriate option than the direct application of the MSSC, which includes the vicarious achievement motive and excludes the disability specific motives inspiration and supercrip image. While there was some variation among the Byon et al. studies (2010, 2011) and the current study in specific predictor motives and variance explained, the most important theme identified in this study is the impact of knowledge. Knowledge was a strong predictor variable in each regression analysis, consistent with the findings of the Byon studies. The practical application of this finding will be presented below.

Discussion on Motives Specific to Disability

Perhaps the most curious finding of this study was that the motives unique to disability sport, the supercrip image and inspiration—the most commonly used presentations of disability in the media—were not as impactful as more traditional motives across multiple consumption variables. Hardin and Hardin (2004) surmise that the ‘supercrip,’ or a person with a disability achieving more than is expected of him/her, is the most common image of an athlete with a disability. Schantz and Gilbert (2001) note that athletes with disabilities are the most commonly used symbols to discuss inspiration in the context of disability. These studies indicate that both supercrip image and inspiration are commonly used by media to promote disability sport. However, our research demonstrates that factors such as escape, acquisition of knowledge, and social interaction are more impactful across multiple measures of consumption compared to the supercrip image and inspiration motives, which are significantly less effective at promoting sport consumption of wheelchair basketball. In fact, only violence/aggression was less impactful at determining intended future consumption of online media, merchandise consumption and repatronage intentions (Table 2).

It should be recognized that this study did not assess what motivated people to attend the event, but instead examined their future consumption. As Cottingham, Gearity and Byon, (2013) noted after discussions with disability sport practitioners, inspiration and the supercrip image may initially attract people to the event, but if there are no compelling factors to retain their attention, they will leave. The findings of this study are focused on examining intended future consumption behavior, not why the spectators were initially in attendance. This will be addressed in future research.

Practical Implications

The MSDSC is a highly effective scale in that each of the nine motives identified in the scale helped to explain at least one of the outcome variables. However, these findings provide unique challenges to practitioners. Specifically, practitioners may find the attempted application of nine motives to be overwhelming. For this reason, we strongly encourage sport practitioners to develop marketing strategies which revolve around the most effectual factors in order to promote their sport most efficiently, which would subsequently increase revenue for their programs. The following section is designed to assist practitioners with strategies related to the four most salient variables, all of which are significant predictor variables for the three consumption variables of intended future online sport consumption, intended merchandise consumption and repatronage intentions (Table 2).

Acquisition of knowledge is the most impactful predictor variable, consistent with motivation studies where the MSSC was used (Byon et al. 2011; Byon et al. 2010). Thus, a more knowledgeable consumer will be a more frequent consumer. Event coordinators should strongly consider developing an event program which explains specific rules of wheelchair basketball (e.g., the travel rule and the disability classification rule), unique strategies of the sport (e.g., the back pick strategy) and an introduction to valuable players on the team. This should be provided to spectators attending the event and featured on relevant websites. Secondly, event coordinators should consider providing demonstrations to fans explaining the unique aspects of the game, including chair skills and strategies, before the games and after games. Most teams have a substantial number of 'spare' wheelchairs and may consider allowing spectators to try the equipment in order to increase their experiential knowledge.

Escape is the next most influential predictor variable. While escape might seem an amorphous experience to provide, these authors recommend using escape as a mechanism to attract a specifically motivated spectator. In other words, if spectators motivated by escape are more likely to re-attend, it would be logical to attract spectators to whom escape was important. These authors would recommend that practitioners use imagery which promotes escape in its advertisements. If they attract spectators motivated by escape, then these spectators might be better candidates to be more invested consumers.

Physical skill of the athletes/aesthetics of the game, the third most effective predictor variable, can be promoted in three ways. First, event coordinators should infuse any online promotions with videos that show the physical skill of the athletes. Second, images on all still promotions (such as posters) should focus on a skill component of the sport. Third, it is important to allow spectators an opportunity to try the equipment. In order to fully appreciate the physical skill of a sport, some tactile experience is necessary.

Finally, socialization is the fourth most powerful predictor variable and the last variable which influences all three intended future consumption measures. We suggest two mechanisms to increase socialization. First, disability sporting events are beginning to charge ticket fees; we would recommend a promotion of two for one. While there might be a loss of immediate revenue, a longer term investment in a viable fan base may be more important. Secondly, event coordinators should consider in-game promotions that involve interaction between spectators. These can be done during half-time and time outs. Additional efforts might include increased uses of social networking, list serve announcements and online fan clubs to increase the experience of socialization.

Table 2

Frequency of Motives as Predictor Variables in Examining Future Intended Consumption Behavior

Motives	Factor		
	Repatronage Intentions	Merchandise	Media
Acquisition of Knowledge	***	***	***
Escape	**	***	***
Physical Skill / Aesthetics	***	**	**
Social Interaction	*	**	*
Physical Attractiveness	*	**	
Drama	***		
Inspiration	**		
Supercric Image		**	
Violence / Aggression			*

*Significance = 0.05-0.01; ** significance = 0.01-0.001; *** significance < 0.001.

Limitations and Future Research

This study represents a finding related to a single disability sport. For the MSDSC to truly be a comprehensive motivation study of disability sport, it needs to be tested in a number of disability sport contexts. Efforts should be made to survey more varied disability sport contexts such as goal ball for the blind, deaf sports and power soccer for those with more impactful mobility impairments. In addition, this event was a collegiate basketball championship but less than 5% of teams registered with the NWBA are college teams. These findings may be applicable to other collegiate wheelchair basketball settings but if organizations such as the NWBA or the International Wheelchair Basketball Association are to use these findings, they may want to consider a replication study in an alternate non-collegiate setting. Finally, Byon et al. (2011) stated that online viewership is substantially higher than live viewership. While these findings are beneficial in helping to understanding how to attract additional spectators and market to them, studies should be conducted on those who view online webcasts, as this is where a more consolidated fan base consumes disability sport.

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